

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 SP-02

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FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5521

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 1139

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (KAUNDA, KENNETH) PFOR ZA US

SUBJECT: KAUNDA VISIT CALLED OFF

1. PERMANENT SECRETARY NGONDA ASKED TO SEE ME URGENTLY AT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY APRIL 27. HE EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD JUST BEEN INSTRUCTED BY "STATE HOUSE" TO INFORM ME THAT PRESIDENT KAUNDA REGRETTED THAT HE MUST CANCEL HIS TRIP TO THE U.S., INCLUDING BOTH HIS MEETING WITH PRESIDENT CARTER AND THE "GREAT HONOR" OF RECEIVING AN HONORARY DEGREE FROM YALE. THE DECISION, HE SAID, WAS REACHED MOST RELUCTANTLY. IT WAS BASED ON THE NEED FOR THE PRESIDENT TO REMAIN IN ZAMBIA DUE TO THE DETERIORATING CONDITIONS IN SURROUNDING COUNTRIES. HE MENTIONED SPECIFICALLY CONCERN OVER ESCALATION OF FIGHTING IN ZAIRE, WHICH HAS GIVEN RISE TO THE ARRIVAL OF REFUGEES IN ZAMBIA, THE SITUATION IN RHODESIA, AND WHAT HE CHARACTERIZED AS DETERIORATING CONDITIONS IN NAMIBIA. HE OFFERED NO SPECIFICS EITHER ON DETERIORATING CONDITIONS IN NAMIBIA OR RHODESIA.

2. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION, NGONDA SAID THAT THE PRESIDENT IS ALSO CANCELLING HIS VISIT TO CANADA, BUT PLANS AT THIS POINT TO ATTEND THE LONDON COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE IN JUNE AND PERHAPS VISIT ONE OR TWO OTHER WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WHILE IN EUROPE FOR THE CONFERENCE.

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COUNTRIES WHILE IN EUROPE FOR THE CONFERENCE.

3. I EXPRESSED MY PERSONAL DISAPPOINTMENT AT THIS DECISION AND ADDED I WAS SURE THAT WOULD BE THE REACTION OF THE USG AND PRESIDENT CARTER. I REVIEWED WITH NGONDA U.S. EFFORTS TO BRING ABOUT NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENTS TO THE PROBLEMS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA, STARTING WITH FORMER SECY KISSINGER'S LUSAKA VISIT

AND RENEWED WITH GREATER VIGOR AND COMMITMENT BY THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION. I NOTED THE IMPRESSIVE START BY THE ADMINISTRATION WITH REPEAL OF THE BYRD AMENDMENT (WHICH NGONDA ACKNOWLEDGED) AND REMARKED THAT WE HAD BEEN NOTABLY ENCOURAGED IN THIS BY PRES KAUNDA'S URGING THAT THE U.S. PLAY A GREATER ROLE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. I SAID THAT BECAUSE OF MY CONCERN THAT THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION NOT BE MISUNDERSTOOD, AND IN VIEW OF MY OWN IMMINENT DEPARTURE FOR A MEETING OF U.S. AMBASSADORS IN AFRICA AND THEN WASHINGTON CONSULTATIONS, I WOULD LIKE THE OPPORTUNITY OF DISCUSSING THIS AND OTHER MATTERS WITH THE PRESIDENT. NGONDA AGREED AND PROMISED TO TRY TO GET ME A REPLY BY TOMORROW NIGHT IN SPITE OF THE PRESIDENT'S INVOLVEMENT IN A SERIES OF WORKSHOPS WITH PARTY LEADERS THIS WEEK AND NEXT.

4. COMMENT: IT WILL TAKE A WHILE TO SORT OUT EXACTLY WHAT THE FACTORS WERE IN KAUNDA'S DECISION. WHILE HIS AND CHONA'S DISSATISFACTION WITH CONFINING THE VISIT WITH PRESIDENT CARTER TO A 30-45 MINUTE OFFICE CALL MAY HAVE BEEN AN ELEMENT, I DOUBT IT WAS A MAJOR ONE. AS RECENTLY AS LAST FRIDAY, KAUNDA WENT OUT OF HIS WAY TO REPEAT TO A VISITING SOUTH AFRICAN JOURNALIST THE SENTIMENTS HE HAD EXPRESSED TO ME OF GREAT PERSONAL RESPECT AND REGARD FOR PRESIDENT CARTER. THE PROPOSED TRIP WHICH WOULD HAVE BEGUN IN THE STATES AND ENDED WITH THE COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE WOULD HAVE REQUIRED A TOTAL ABSENCE FROM ZAMBIA BY THE PRESIDENT OF ALMOST FOUR WEEKS. HAVING SHAKEN UP HIS GOVERNMENT AND MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT LAST WEEK, KAUNDA IS NOW IN THE PROCESS OF WORKING OUT PARTY CHANGES

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IN AN EFFORT TO HALT THE STEADY DECLINE IN PARTY, AND INDIRECTLY, PRESIDENTIAL STRENGTH. THE REAL POSSIBILITY OF MILITARY ACTIVITY ON BOTH THE RHODESIAN AND ZAIRIAN BORDERS IS CERTAINLY WORRISOME TO THE PRESIDENT. HE IS ALREADY UNDER DOMESTIC CRITICISM FOR DEVOTING TOO MUCH OF HIS TIME TO RHODESIA AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS. NKOMO'S FIRM POSITION AGAINST U.S. PARTICIPATION IN THE RHODESIA CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE AS AGAINST KAUNDA'S OWN ENCOURAGEMENT OF U.S. INVOLVEMENT PLACES HIM IN A SLIGHTLY EMBARRASSING POSITION VIS-A-VIS THE U.S. ALL THESE WERE PROBABLY FACTORS IN THE DECISION, THOUGH I STRONGLY SUSPECT THE DOMESTIC SITUATION IS THE MOST IMPORTANT. I HOPE TO GET A CLEARER IDEA AFTER HAVING SEEN THE PRESIDENT.

LOW

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